





A Full and True Account of the BATTEL Fought  
last FRIDAY, Between the *Antient* and the *Modern*  
BOOKS in St. JAMES's LIBRARY.

THE BOOKSELLER ° TO THE READER.

THE following Discourse, as it is unquestionably of the same author, so it seems to have been written about the same time with the former; I mean the year 1697, when the famous dispute was on foot about ancient and modern learning. The controversy took its rise from an essay of Sir William Temple's upon that subject, which was answered by W. Wotton, B.D., with an Appendix by Dr. Bentley, endeavouring to destroy the credit of Æsop and Phalaris for authors, whom Sir William Temple had, in the essay before-mentioned, highly commended. In that appendix the doctor falls hard upon a new edition of Phalaris put out by the Honourable Charles Boyle, now Earl of Orrery, to which Mr. Boyle replied at large, with great learning and wit; and the doctor voluminously rejoined. In this dispute, the town highly resented to see a person of Sir William Temple's character and merits roughly used by the two reverend gentlemen aforesaid, and without any manner of provocation. At length, there appearing no end of the quarrel, our author tells us that the BOOKS in St. James's Library, ° looking upon themselves as parties principally concerned, took up the controversy and came to a decisive battle. But the manuscript by the injury of fortune or weather being in several places imperfect, we cannot learn to which side the victory fell.

I must warn the reader to beware of applying to persons what is here meant only of books, in the most literal sense. So, when Virgil is mentioned, we are not to understand the person of a famous poet called by that name, but only certain sheets of paper, bound up in leather, containing in print the works of the said poet; and so of the rest.

THE PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR.

*SATIRE is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own; which is the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets in the world, and that so very few are offended with it. But if it should happen otherwise, the danger is not great; and I have learned from long experience never to apprehend mischief from those understandings I have been able to provoke; for*

anger and fury, though they add strength to the sinews of the body, yet are found to relax those of the mind, and to render all its efforts feeble and impotent.

There is a brain that will endure but one scumming; let the owner gather it with discretion, and manage his little stock with husbandry; but of all things, let him beware of bringing it under the lash of his betters, because that will make it all bubble up into impertinence, and he will find no new supply. Wit, without knowledge, being a sort of cream, which gathers in a night to the top, and by a skilful hand may be soon whipped into froth; but once skimmed away, what appears underneath will be fit for nothing but to be thrown to the hogs.

### A FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE FOUGHT LAST FRIDAY, &c.

WHOEVER examines with due circumspection into the *\*Annual Records of Time*, will find it remarked that War is the child of Pride, and Pride the daughter of Riches. The former of which assertions may be soon granted, but one cannot so easily subscribe to the latter; for Pride is nearly related to Beggary and Want, either by father or mother, and sometimes by both: and to speak naturally, it very seldom happens among men to fall out when all have enough, invasions usually travelling from north to south, that is to say, from poverty upon plenty. The most ancient and natural grounds of quarrels are lust and avarice; which, though we may allow to be brethren, or collateral branches of pride, are certainly the issues of want. For, to speak in the phrase of writers upon politics, we may observe in the Republic of Dogs<sup>2</sup> (which, in its original, seems to be an institution of the Many) that the whole state is ever in the profoundest peace after a full meal; and that civil broils arise among them when it happens for one great bone to be seized on by some leading dog, who either divides it among the few and then it falls to an oligarchy, or keeps it to himself and then it runs up to a tyranny. The same reasoning also holds place among them in those dissensions we behold upon a turgescency in any of their females. For the right of possession lying in common (it being impossible to establish a property in so delicate a case) jealousies and suspicions do so abound that the whole commonwealth of that street is reduced to a manifest state of war, of every citizen against every citizen, till some one of more courage, conduct, or fortune than the rest, seizes and enjoys the prize; upon which naturally arises plenty of

\* 'Riches produceth pride; pride is war's ground, &c.' *Vide* Ephem. de Mary Clarke; opt. edit.<sup>2</sup>



heart-burning, and envy, and snarling against the happy dog. Again, if we look upon any of these republics engaged in a foreign war either of invasion or defence, we shall find the same reasoning will serve as to the grounds and occasions of each, and that poverty or want in some degree or other (whether real or in opinion, which makes no alteration in the case) has a great share as well as pride on the part of the aggressor.

Now, whoever will please to take this scheme, and either reduce or adapt it to an intellectual state or commonwealth of learning, will soon discover the first ground of disagreement between the two great parties at this time in arms, and may form just conclusions upon the merits of either cause. But the issue or events of this war are not so easy to conjecture at; for the present quarrel is so inflamed by the warm heads of either faction, and the pretensions *somewhere or other* so exorbitant, as not to admit the least overtures of accommodation. This quarrel first began (as I have heard it affirmed by an old dweller in the neighbourhood) about a small spot of ground, lying and being upon one of the two tops of the hill Parnassus; the highest and largest of which had, it seems, been time out of mind in quiet possession of certain tenants called the Ancients, and the other was held by the Moderns. But these, disliking their present station, sent certain ambassadors to the Ancients, complaining of a great nuisance; how the height of that part of Parnassus quite spoiled the prospect of theirs, especially towards the *East*;<sup>o</sup> and therefore, to avoid a war, offered them the choice of this alternative—either that the Ancients would please to remove themselves and their effects down to the lower summity, which the Moderns would graciously surrender to them, and advance in their place; or else that the said Ancients will give leave to the Moderns to come with shovels and mattocks, and level the said hill as low as they shall think it convenient. To which the Ancients made answer, how little they expected such a message as this from a colony whom they had admitted, out of their own free grace, to so near a neighbourhood. That, as to their own seat, they were aborigines of it, and therefore to talk with them of a removal or surrender, was a language they did not understand. That if the height of the hill on their side shortened the prospect of the Moderns, it was a disadvantage they could not help; but desired them to consider whether that injury (if it be any) were not largely recompensed by the shade and shelter it afforded them. That as to levelling or digging down, it was either folly or ignorance to propose it, if they did, or did not know, how that side of the hill was an entire rock, which would break their tools and hearts without any damage to itself. That they would therefore advise the Moderns rather to raise their own side of the hill than dream of pulling



down that of the Ancients; to the former of which they would not only give licence, but also largely contribute. All this was rejected by the Moderns with much indignation, who still insisted upon one of the two expedients. And so this difference broke out into a long and obstinate war, maintained on the one part by resolution and by the courage of certain leaders and allies; but on the other by the greatness of their number, upon all defeats affording continual recruits. In this quarrel whole rivulets of ink have been exhausted, and the virulence of both parties enormously augmented. Now, it must here be understood that ink is the great missive weapon in all battles of the learned, which, conveyed through a sort of engine called a quill, infinite numbers of these are darted at the enemy by the valiant on each side, with equal skill and violence, as if it were an engagement of porcupines. This malignant liquor was compounded by the engineer who invented it, of two ingredients, which are gall and copperas; by its bitterness and venom to suit in some degree, as well as to foment, the genius of the combatants. And as the Grecians, after an engagement, when they could not agree about the victory, were wont to set up trophies on both sides, the beaten party being content to be at the same expense to keep itself in countenance (a laudable and ancient custom, happily revived of late in the art of war); so the learned, after a sharp and bloody dispute, do on both sides hang out their trophies too, whichever comes by the worst. These trophies have largely inscribed on them the merits of the cause, a full impartial account of such a battle, and how the victory fell clearly to the party that set them up. They are known to the world under several names, as *disputes*, *arguments*, *rejoinders*, *brief considerations*, *answers*, *replies*, *remarks*, *reflections*, *objections*, *confutations*. For a very few days they are fixed up in all public places either by themselves or their \*representatives, for passengers to gaze at;° from whence the chiefest and largest are removed to certain magazines they call libraries, there to remain in a quarter purposely assigned them, and from thenceforth begin to be called Books of Controversy.

In these books is wonderfully instilled and preserved the spirit of each warrior, while he is alive; and after his death his soul transmigrates there to inform them. This at least is the more common opinion; but I believe it is with libraries as with other cemeteries, where some philosophers affirm that a certain spirit, which they call *brutum hominis*,° hovers over the monument till the body is corrupted and turns to dust or to worms, but then vanishes or dissolves. So, we may say, a restless spirit haunts over every book till dust or worms have seized upon it, which to some may

\* Their title-pages.



happen in a few days, but to others, later; and therefore books of controversy, being of all others haunted by the most disorderly spirits, have always been confined in a separate lodge from the rest; and, for fear of mutual violence against each other, it was thought prudent by our ancestors to bind them to the peace with strong iron chains.<sup>o</sup> Of which invention the original occasion was this. When the works of Scotus<sup>o</sup> first came out, they were carried to a certain library and had lodgings appointed them; but this author was no sooner settled than he went to visit his master Aristotle; and there both concerted together to seize Plato by main force and turn him out from his ancient station among the divines, where he had peaceably dwelt near eight hundred years. The attempt succeeded, and the two usurpers have reigned ever since in his stead: but to maintain quiet for the future, it was decreed that all polemics of the larger size should be held fast with a chain.

By this expedient the public peace of libraries might certainly have been preserved, if a new species of controversial books had not arose of late years, instinct with a most malignant spirit, from the war above-mentioned between the learned about the higher summit of Parnassus.

When these books were first admitted into the public libraries, I remember to have said upon occasion to several persons concerned, how I was sure they would create broils wherever they came, unless a world of care were taken; and therefore I advised that the champions of each side should be coupled together or otherwise mixed, that, like the blending of contrary poisons, their malignity might be employed among themselves. And it seems I was neither an ill prophet nor an ill counsellor; for it was nothing else but the neglect of this caution which gave occasion to the terrible fight that happened on Friday last, between the ancient and modern books in the King's Library. Now, because the talk of this battle is so fresh in everybody's mouth, and the expectation of the town so great to be informed in the particulars; I, being possessed of all qualifications requisite in an historian, and retained by neither party, have resolved to comply with the urgent *importunity of my friends* by writing down a full impartial account thereof.

The guardian of the regal library, a person of great valour but chiefly renowned for his *\*humanity*,<sup>o</sup> had been a fierce champion for the Moderns; and, in an engagement upon Parnassus, had vowed, with his own hands, to knock down two of the Ancient chiefs<sup>o</sup> who guarded a small pass on the superior rock; but endeavouring to climb up was cruelly

\* The Honourable Mr. Boyle, in the preface to his edition of Phalaris, says he was refused a manuscript by the library-keeper, '*pro solita humanitate sua*'.



obstructed by his own unhappy weight and tendency towards his centre, a quality to which those of the Modern party are extreme subject; for, being light-headed, they have in speculation a wonderful agility, and conceive nothing too high for them to mount; but in reducing to practice, discover a mighty pressure about their posteriors and their heels. Having thus failed in his design, the disappointed champion bore a cruel rancour to the Ancients, which he resolved to gratify by showing all marks of his favour to the books of their adversaries, and lodging them in the fairest apartments; when at the same time, whatever book had the boldness to own itself for an advocate of the Ancients, was buried alive in some obscure corner, and threatened upon the least displeasure to be turned out of doors. Besides, it so happened that about this time there was a strange confusion of place among all the books in the library,<sup>o</sup> for which several reasons were assigned. Some imputed it to a great heap of learned dust, which a perverse wind blew off from a shelf of Moderns into the keeper's eyes. Others affirmed he had a humour to pick the worms out of the schoolmen, and swallow them fresh and fasting; whereof some fell upon his spleen, and some climbed up into his head, to the great perturbation of both. And lastly, others maintained that by walking much in the dark about the library, he had quite lost the situation of it out of his head; and therefore, in replacing his books, he was apt to mistake and clap *Des Cartes* next to *Aristotle*; poor *Plato* had got between *Hobbes* and the *Seven Wise Masters*,<sup>o</sup> and *Virgil* was hemmed in with *Dryden* on one side, and *Withers*<sup>o</sup> on the other.

Meanwhile, those books that were advocates for the Moderns chose out one from among them to make a progress through the whole library, examine the number and strength of their party, and concert their affairs. This messenger performed all things very industriously, and brought back with him a list of their forces, in all fifty thousand, consisting chiefly of light-horse, heavy-armed foot, and mercenaries;<sup>o</sup> whereof the foot were in general but sorrily armed, and worse clad; their horses large, but extremely out of case and heart; however, some few, by trading among the Ancients, had furnished themselves tolerably enough.

While things were in this ferment, discord grew extremely high; hot words passed on both sides, and ill blood was plentifully bred. Here a solitary Ancient, squeezed up among a whole shelf of Moderns, offered fairly to dispute the case, and to prove by manifest reasons, that the priority was due to them, from long possession, and in regard of their prudence, antiquity, and, above all, their great merits towards the Moderns. But these denied the premisses, and seemed very much to wonder how the Ancients could pretend to insist upon their antiquity,



when it was so plain (if they went to that) that the Moderns were much the more *\*ancient* of the two.<sup>o</sup> As for any obligations they owed to the Ancients, they renounced them all. 'Tis true,' said they, 'we are informed some few of our party have been so mean to borrow their subsistence from you; but the rest, infinitely the greater number (and especially we French and English), were so far from stooping to so base an example that there never passed, till this very hour, six words between us. For our horses are of our own breeding, our arms of our own forging, and our clothes of our own cutting out and sewing.' Plato was by chance upon the next shelf, and observing those that spoke to be in the ragged plight mentioned a while ago; their jades lean and foundered, their weapons of rotten wood, their armour rusty, and nothing but rags underneath; he laughed loud, and in his pleasant way swore, by G— he believed them.

Now, the Moderns had not proceeded in their late negotiation with secrecy enough to escape the notice of the enemy. For those advocates who had begun the quarrel by setting first on foot the dispute of precedency, talked so loud of coming to a battle, that Temple happened to overhear them, and gave immediate intelligence to the Ancients, who thereupon drew up their scattered troops together, resolving to act upon the defensive; upon which several of the Moderns fled over to their party, and among the rest Temple himself. This Temple, having been educated and long conversed among the Ancients, was, of all the Moderns, their greatest favourite, and became their greatest champion.

Things were at this crisis, when a material accident fell out. For, upon the highest corner of a large window, there dwelt a certain spider, swollen up to the first magnitude by the destruction of infinite numbers of flies, whose spoils lay scattered before the gates of his palace, like human bones before the cave of some giant. The avenues to his castle were guarded with turnpikes and palisadoes, all after the modern way of fortification. After you had passed several courts, you came to the centre, wherein you might behold the constable himself in his own lodgings, which had windows fronting to each avenue, and ports to sally out upon all occasions of prey or defence. In this mansion he had for some time dwelt in peace and plenty, without danger to his person by swallows from above, or to his palace by brooms from below; when it was the pleasure of fortune to conduct thither a wandering bee, to whose curiosity a broken pane in the glass had discovered itself, and in he went; where, expatiating a while, he at last happened to alight upon one of the outward walls of the spider's citadel, which, yielding to the unequal weight, sunk down to the very foundation. Thrice he endeavoured to force his passage, and thrice

\* According to the modern paradox.



the centre shook. The spider within, feeling the terrible convulsion, supposed at first that nature was approaching to her final dissolution; or else that Beelzebub, with all his legions, was come to revenge the death of many thousands of his subjects, whom this enemy had slain and devoured. However, he at length valiantly resolved to issue forth, and meet his fate. Meanwhile the bee had acquitted himself of his toils, and, posted securely at some distance, was employed in cleansing his wings and disengaging them from the ragged remnants of the cobweb. By this time the spider was adventured out, when, beholding the chasms and ruins and dilapidations of his fortress, he was very near at his wit's end; he stormed and swore like a madman, and swelled till he was ready to burst. At length, casting his eye upon the bee, and wisely gathering causes from events (for they knew each other by sight), 'A plague split you,' said he, 'for a giddy son of a whore. Is it you, with a vengeance, that have made this litter here? Could you not look before you, and be d—d? Do you think I have nothing else to do (in the devil's name) but to mend and repair after your arse?'—'Good words, friend,' said the bee (having now pruned himself and being disposed to droll) 'I'll give you my hand and word to come near your kennel no more; I was never in such a confounded pickle since I was born.'—'Sirrah,' replied the spider, 'if it were not for breaking an old custom in our family never to stir abroad against an enemy, I should come and teach you better manners.'—'I pray have patience', said the bee, 'or you will spend your substance, and for aught I see, you may stand in need of it all towards the repair of your house.'—'Rogue, rogue,' replied the spider, 'yet, methinks you should have more respect to a person whom all the world allows to be so much your betters.'—'By my troth,' said the bee, 'the comparison will amount to a very good jest, and you will do me a favour to let me know the reasons that all the world is pleased to use in so hopeful a dispute.' At this the spider, having swelled himself into the size and posture of a disputant, began his argument in the true spirit of controversy with a resolution to be heartily scurrilous and angry, to urge *on* his own reasons without the least regard to the answers or objections of his opposite, and fully predetermined in his mind against all conviction.

'Not to disparage myself', said he, 'by the comparison with such a rascal, what art thou but a vagabond without house or home, without stock or inheritance? Born to no possession of your own, but a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. Your livelihood is an universal plunder upon nature; a free-booter over fields and gardens; and for the sake of stealing, will rob a nettle as readily as a violet. Whereas I am a domestic animal, furnished with a native stock within myself. This large castle (to shew my



improvements in the mathematics<sup>o</sup>) is all built with my own hands, and the materials extracted altogether out of my own person.'

'I am glad', answered the bee, 'to hear you grant at least that I am come honestly by my wings and my voice; for then, it seems, I am obliged to Heaven alone for my flights and my music; and Providence would never have bestowed me two such gifts, without designing them for the noblest ends. I visit indeed all the flowers and blossoms of the field and the garden; but whatever I collect from thence enriches myself without the least injury to their beauty, their smell, or their taste. Now, for you and your skill in architecture and other mathematics, I have little to say. In that building of yours there might, for aught I know, have been labour and method enough; but, by woeful experience for us both, 'tis too plain the materials are naught, and I hope you will henceforth take warning, and consider duration and matter as well as method and art. You boast, indeed, of being obliged to no other creature but of drawing and spinning out all from yourself; that is to say, if we may judge of the liquor in the vessel by what issues out, you possess a good plentiful store of dirt and poison in your breast; and though I would by no means lessen or disparage your genuine stock of either, yet I doubt you are somewhat obliged, for an increase of both, to a little foreign assistance. Your inherent portion of dirt does not fail of acquisitions by sweepings exhaled from below; and one insect furnishes you with a share of poison to destroy another. So that, in short, the question comes all to this—Whether is the nobler being of the two, that which, by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride, which feeding and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, produc[es] nothing at last but flybane and a cobweb; or that which, by an universal range, with long search, much study, true judgment, and distinction of things, brings home honey and wax.'

This dispute was managed with such eagerness, clamour, and warmth, that the two parties of books in arms below stood silent a while, waiting in suspense what would be the issue, which was not long undetermined. For the bee, grown impatient at so much loss of time, fled straight away to a bed of roses without looking for a reply, and left the spider like an orator, collected in himself, and just prepared to burst out.

It happened upon this emergency, that Æsop broke silence first. He had been of late most barbarously treated by a strange effect of the regent's humanity,<sup>o</sup> who had tore off his title-page, sorely defaced one half of his leaves, and chained him fast among a shelf of Moderns. Where, soon discovering how high the quarrel was like to proceed, he tried all his arts, and turned himself to a thousand forms. At length, in the



borrowed shape of an ass,<sup>o</sup> the regent mistook him for a Modern, by which means he had time and opportunity to escape to the Ancients, just when the spider and the bee were entering into their contest, to which he gave his attention with a world of pleasure; and when it was ended, swore in the loudest key that in all his life he had never known two cases so parallel and adapt to each other, as that in the window, and this upon the shelves. 'The disputants', said he, 'have admirably managed the dispute between them, have taken in the full strength of all that is to be said on both sides, and exhausted the substance of every argument *pro* and *con*. It is but to adjust the reasonings of both to the present quarrel, then to compare and apply the labours and fruits of each, as the bee has learnedly deduced them, and we shall find the conclusions fall plain and close upon the Moderns and us. For pray, gentlemen, was ever anything so modern as the spider in his air, his turns, and his paradoxes? He argues in the behalf of you his brethren, and himself, with many boastings of his native stock and great genius; that he spins and spits wholly from himself, and scorns to own any obligation or assistance from without. Then he displays to you his great skill in architecture and improvement in the mathematics. To all this the bee, as an advocate retained by us the Ancients, thinks fit to answer—that if one may judge of the great genius or inventions of the Moderns by what they have produced, you will hardly have countenance to bear you out in boasting of either. Erect your schemes with as much method and skill as you please; yet if the materials be nothing but dirt, spun out of your own entrails (the guts of modern brains), the edifice will conclude at last in a cobweb, the duration of which, like that of other spiders' webs, may be imputed to their being forgotten, or neglected, or hid in a corner. For anything else of genuine that the Moderns may pretend to, I cannot recollect, unless it be a large vein of wrangling and satire,<sup>o</sup> much of a nature and substance with the spider's poison; which, however they pretend to spit wholly out of themselves, is improved by the same arts, by feeding upon the insects and vermin of the age. As for us, the Ancients, we are content, with the bee, to pretend to nothing of our own beyond our wings and our voice, that is to say, our flights and our language. For the rest, whatever we have got has been by infinite labour, and search, and ranging through every corner of nature; the difference is that instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chose to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light."<sup>o</sup>

'Tis wonderful to conceive the tumult arisen among the books, upon the close of this long descant of Æsop; both parties took the hint, and heightened their animosities so on a sudden that they resolved it should



come to a battle. Immediately the two main bodies withdrew under their several ensigns to the further parts of the library, and there entered into cabals and consults<sup>o</sup> upon the present emergency. The Moderns were in very warm debates upon the choice of their leaders; and nothing less than the fear impending from their enemies could have kept them from mutinies upon this occasion. The difference was greatest among the horse, where every private trooper pretended to the chief command, from Tasso and Milton to Dryden and Withers. The light-horse were commanded by Cowley and Despréaux.<sup>o</sup> There came the bowmen under their valiant leaders, Des Cartes, Gassendi, and Hobbes,<sup>o</sup> whose strength was such that they could shoot their arrows beyond the atmosphere, never to fall down again, but turn like that of Evander<sup>o</sup> into meteors; or, like the cannon-ball, into stars. Paracelsus brought a squadron of stink-pot-flingers from the snowy mountains of Rhætia. There came a vast body of dragoons, of different nations, under the leading of Harvey, their great aga:<sup>o</sup> part armed with scythes, the weapons of death, part with lances and long knives, all steeped in poison; part shot bullets of a most malignant nature, and used white powder which infallibly killed without report. There came several bodies of heavy-armed foot, all mercenaries, under the ensigns of Guicciardine, Davila, Polydore Virgil, Buchanan, Mariana, Cambden,<sup>o</sup> and others. The engineers were commanded by Regiomontanus and Wilkins.<sup>o</sup> The rest were a confused multitude, led by Scotus, Aquinas, and Bellarmine;<sup>o</sup> of mighty bulk and stature, but without either arms, courage, or discipline. In the last place came infinite swarms of *\*calones*, a disorderly rout led by L'Estrange;<sup>o</sup> rogues and ragamuffins that follow the camp for nothing but the plunder, all without coats to cover them.

The army of the Ancients was much fewer in number. Homer led the horse, and Pindar the light-horse; Euclid was chief engineer; Plato and Aristotle commanded the bowmen, Herodotus and Livy the foot, Hippocrates the dragoons. The allies, led by Vossius<sup>o</sup> and Temple, brought up the rear.

All things violently tending to a decisive battle, Fame, who much frequented, and had a large apartment formerly assigned her in the regal library, fled up straight to Jupiter to whom she delivered a faithful account of all that had passed between the two parties below (for, among the gods, she always tells truth). Jove, in great concern, convokes a council in the Milky-Way. The senate assembled, he declares the occasion of convening them: a bloody battle just impendent between two mighty armies of Ancient and Modern creatures called books, wherein

\* These are pamphlets, which are not bound or covered.



the celestial interest was but too deeply concerned. Momus, the patron of the Moderns, made an excellent speech in their favour, which was answered by Pallas,<sup>o</sup> the protectress of the Ancients. The assembly was divided in their affections, when Jupiter commanded the book of fate to be laid before him. Immediately were brought by Mercury three large volumes in folio containing memoirs of all things, past, present, and to come. The clasps were of silver double gilt, the covers of celestial turkey leather, and the paper such as here on earth might pass almost for vellum. Jupiter, having silently read the decree, would communicate the import to none, but presently shut up the book.

Without the doors of this assembly, there attended a vast number of light, nimble gods, menial servants to Jupiter: these are his ministering instruments in all affairs below. They travel in a caravan, more or less together, and are fastened to each other like a link of galley-slaves, by a light chain which passes from them to Jupiter's great toe; and yet, in receiving or delivering a message they may never approach above the lowest step of his throne, where he and they whisper to each other through a long hollow trunk. These deities are called by mortal men *accidents* or *events*; but the gods call them second causes.<sup>o</sup> Jupiter having delivered his message to a certain number of these divinities, they flew immediately down to the pinnacle of the regal library, and consulting a few minutes, entered unseen and disposed the parties according to their orders.

Meanwhile, Momus fearing the worst, and calling to mind an ancient prophecy which bore no very good face to his children the Moderns, bent his flight to the region of a malignant deity called Criticism. She dwelt on the top of a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla; there Momus found her extended in her den, upon the spoils of numberless volumes half devoured. At her right hand sat Ignorance, her father and husband, blind with age; at her left, Pride her mother, dressing her up in the scraps of paper herself had torn. There was Opinion her sister, light of foot, hoodwinked, and headstrong, yet giddy and perpetually turning. About her played her children, Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-Manners. The goddess herself had claws like a cat; her head, and ears, and voice, resembled those of an ass; her teeth fallen out before, her eyes turned inward as if she looked only upon herself; her diet was the overflowing of her own gall; her spleen was so large as to stand prominent like a dug of the first rate, nor wanted excrescencies in form of teats, at which a crew of ugly monsters were greedily sucking; and what is wonderful to conceive, the bulk of spleen increased faster than the sucking could diminish it. 'Goddess,' said



Momus, 'can you sit idly here while our devout worshippers the Moderns are this minute entering into a cruel battle, and perhaps now lying under the swords of their enemies? Who then hereafter will ever sacrifice or build altars to our divinities? Haste, therefore, to the British Isle, and if possible prevent their destruction, while I make factions among the gods and gain them over to our party.'

Momus, having thus delivered himself, stayed not for an answer, but left the goddess to her own resentments. Up she rose in a rage and, as it is the form upon such occasions, began a soliloquy. 'Tis I' (said she) 'who give wisdom to infants and idiots; by me, children grow wiser than their parents; by me, beaux become politicians, and schoolboys judges of philosophy;° by me, sophisters debate and conclude upon the depths of knowledge; and coffeehouse wits, instinct by me, can correct an author's style and display his minutest errors without understanding a syllable of his matter or his language. By me, striplings spend their judgment as they do their estate, before it comes into their hands. 'Tis I who have deposed wit and knowledge from their empire over poetry, and advanced myself in their stead. And shall a few upstart Ancients dare to oppose me?—But come, my aged parents, and you my children dear, and thou my beauteous sister; let us ascend my chariot and haste to assist our devout Moderns, who are now sacrificing to us a hecatomb, as I perceive by that grateful smell which from thence reaches my nostrils.'

The goddess and her train having mounted the chariot, which was drawn by tame geese, flew over infinite regions shedding her influence in due places, till at length she arrived at her beloved island of Britain; but in hovering over its metropolis, what blessings did she not let fall upon her seminaries of Gresham and Covent Garden!° And now she reached the fatal plain of St. James's Library, at what time the two armies were upon the point to engage; where, entering with all her caravan unseen, and landing upon a case of shelves, now desert but once inhabited by a colony of virtuosos, she stayed a while to observe the posture of both armies.

But here the tender cares of a mother began to fill her thoughts and move in her breast. For, at the head of a troop of Modern bowmen, she cast her eyes upon her son Wotton, to whom the fates had assigned a very short thread; Wotton, a young hero, whom an unknown father of mortal race begot by stolen embraces with this goddess. He was the darling of his mother above all her children, and she resolved to go and comfort him. But first according to the good old custom of deities she cast about to change her shape, for fear the divinity of her countenance might dazzle his mortal sight and overcharge the rest of his senses. She therefore gathered up her person into an octavo compass: her body grew white and



arid, and split in pieces with dryness; the thick turned into pasteboard, and the thin into paper, upon which her parents and children artfully strewed a black juice, or decoction of gall and soot, in form of letters; her head, and voice, and spleen, kept their primitive form, and that which before was a cover of skin did still continue so. In which guise she marched on towards the Moderns, undistinguishable in shape and dress from the divine Bentley, Wotton's dearest friend. 'Brave Wotton,' said the goddess, 'why do our troops stand idle here, to spend their present vigour and opportunity of the day? Away, let us haste to the generals and advise to give the onset immediately.' Having spoke thus, she took the ugliest of her monsters, full glutted from her spleen, and flung it invisibly into his mouth, which flying straight up into his head squeezed out his eyeballs, gave him a distorted look, and half overturned his brain. Then she privately ordered two of her beloved children, Dulness and Ill-Manners, closely to attend his person in all encounters. Having thus accoutred him she vanished in a mist, and the hero perceived it was the goddess his mother.

The destined hour of fate being now arrived, the fight began; whereof, before I dare adventure to make a particular description, I must, after the example of other authors, petition for a hundred tongues, and mouths, and hands, and pens, which would all be too little to perform so immense a work. Say, goddess, that presidest over History, who it was that first advanced in the field of battle! Paracelsus, at the head of his dragoons, observing Galen° in the adverse wing, darted his javelin with a mighty force, which the brave Ancient received upon his shield, the point breaking in the second fold. \* . \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \* *Hic pauca  
desunt.*°  
\* \* \* \* \*

They bore the wounded aga on their shields to his chariot \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
*Desunt* \* \* \* \* \*  
*nonnulla.* \* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

Then Aristotle, observing Bacon° advance with a furious mien, drew his bow to the head and let fly his arrow, which missed the valiant Modern and went hissing over his head. But Des Cartes it hit; the steel point quickly found a defect in his head-piece; it pierced the leather and the pasteboard and went in at his right eye. The torture of the pain whirled the valiant bowman round till death, like a star of superior influence, drew him into his own vortex.°



*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Ingens hiatus</i>		*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>hic in MS.</i>		*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	* when Homer appeared at the head of			

the cavalry, mounted on a furious horse with difficulty managed by the rider himself, but which no other mortal durst approach; he rode among the enemy's ranks, and bore down all before him. Say, goddess, whom he slew first and whom he slew last! First, Gondibert<sup>o</sup> advanced against him, clad in heavy armour and mounted on a staid, sober gelding, not so famed for his speed as his docility in kneeling whenever his rider would mount or alight. He had made a vow to Pallas, that he would never leave the field till he had spoiled \*Homer of his armour; madman, who had never once seen the wearer nor understood his strength! Him Homer overthrew, horse and man, to the ground, there to be trampled and choked in the dirt. Then with a long spear he slew †Denham, a stout Modern<sup>o</sup> who from his father's side derived his lineage from Apollo, but his mother was of mortal race. He fell, and bit the earth. The celestial part Apollo took and made it a star, but the terrestrial lay wallowing upon the ground. Then Homer slew Wesley<sup>o</sup> with a kick of his horse's heel; he took Perrault by mighty force out of his saddle, then hurled him at Fontenelle,<sup>o</sup> with the same blow dashing out both their brains.

On the left wing of the horse, Virgil appeared in shining armour, completely fitted to his body. He was mounted on a dapple grey steed, the slowness of whose pace was an effect of the highest mettle and vigour. He cast his eye on the adverse wing, with a desire to find an object worthy of his valour, when, behold, upon a sorrel gelding of a monstrous size appeared a foe issuing from among the thickest of the enemy's squadrons; but his speed was less than his noise, for his horse, old and lean, spent the dregs of his strength in a high trot, which though it made slow advances yet caused a loud clashing of his armour, terrible to hear. The two cavaliers had now approached within the throw of a lance, when the stranger desired a parley, and, lifting up the vizard of his helmet, a face hardly appeared from within, which after a pause was known for that of the renowned Dryden. The brave Ancient suddenly started, as one possessed with surprise and disappointment together; for the helmet was nine times too large for the head, which appeared situate far in the hinder part, even like the lady in a lobster,<sup>o</sup> or like a mouse under a canopy of

\* *Vid.* Homer.

† Sir John Denham's poems are very unequal, extremely good and very indifferent; so that his detractors said he was not the real author of *Cooper's Hill*.



state, or like a shrivelled beau from within the penthouse of a modern periwig; and the voice was suited to the visage, sounding weak and remote. Dryden, in a long harangue,<sup>o</sup> soothed up the good Ancient, called him 'father', and by a large deduction of genealogies made it plainly appear that they were nearly related. Then he humbly proposed an exchange of armour, as a lasting mark of hospitality between them. Virgil consented (for the goddess Diffidence came unseen and cast a mist before his eyes), though his was of gold\* and cost a hundred beeves, the other's but of rusty iron. However, this glittering armour became the Modern yet worse than his own. Then they agreed to exchange horses; but when it came to the trial, Dryden was afraid and utterly unable to mount.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*

*Alter hiatus  
in MS.*

Lucan<sup>o</sup> appeared upon a fiery horse of admirable shape, but headstrong, bearing the rider where he list over the field; he made a mighty slaughter among the enemy's horse, which destruction to stop, Blackmore,<sup>o</sup> a famous Modern (but one of the mercenaries) strenuously opposed himself and darted a javelin with a strong hand, which falling short of its mark, struck deep in the earth. Then Lucan threw a lance, but Æsculapius came unseen and turned off the point. 'Brave Modern,' said Lucan, 'I perceive some god protects you, for never did my arm so deceive me before. But what mortal can contend with a god? Therefore let us fight no longer, but present gifts to each other.' Lucan then bestowed the Modern a pair of spurs, and Blackmore gave Lucan a bridle.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Creech;<sup>o</sup> but the goddess Dulness took a cloud, formed into the shape of Horace, armed and mounted, and placed it in a flying posture before him. Glad was the cavalier to begin a combat with a flying foe, and pursued the image, threatening loud, till at last it lead him to the peaceful bower of his father Ogleby,<sup>o</sup> by whom he was disarmed and assigned to his repose.

Then Pindar slew —, and —, Oldham, and — and Afra the Amazon,<sup>o</sup> light of foot. Never advancing in a direct line but wheeling with

\* *Vid.* Homer



incredible agility and force, he made a terrible slaughter among the enemy's light horse. Him when Cowley<sup>o</sup> observed, his generous heart burnt within him and he advanced against the fierce Ancient, imitating his address, and pace, and career, as well as the vigour of his horse and his own skill would allow. When the two cavaliers had approached within the length of three javelins, first Cowley threw a lance, which missed Pindar, and passing into the enemy's ranks, fell ineffectual to the ground. Then Pindar darted a javelin so large and weighty that scarce a dozen cavaliers,<sup>o</sup> as cavaliers are in our degenerate days, could raise it from the ground; yet he threw it with ease, and it went by an unerring hand singing through the air; nor could the Modern have avoided present death, if he had not luckily opposed the shield that had been given him by Venus. And now both heroes drew their swords, but the Modern was so aghast and disordered that he knew not where he was; his shield dropped from his hands; thrice he fled, and thrice he could not escape. At last he turned, and lifting up his hand in the posture of a suppliant, 'Godlike Pindar,' said he, 'spare my life, and possess my horse with these arms, besides the ransom which my friends will give when they hear I am alive and your prisoner.' 'Dog!' said Pindar, 'let your ransom stay with your friends; but your carcass shall be left for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.' With that he raised his sword, and with a mighty stroke cleft the wretched Modern in twain, the sword pursuing the blow; and one half lay panting on the ground, to be trod in pieces by the horses' feet; the other half was borne by the frightened steed through the field. This \*Venus took, washed it seven times in ambrosia, then struck it thrice with a sprig of amaranth; upon which the leather grew round and soft, and the leaves turned into feathers, and being gilded before, continued gilded still; so it became a dove, and she harnessed it to her chariot. \* \*

*	*	*	*	*	*	<i>Hiatus valdè de-</i>
*	*	*	*	*	*	<i>flendus in MS.</i>
*	*	*	*	*	*	* *

Day being far spent, and the numerous forces of the Moderns half inclining to a retreat, there issued forth from a squadron of their heavy-armed foot, a captain whose name was Bentley, in person the most deformed of all the Moderns; tall, but without shape or comeliness; large, but without strength or proportion. His armour was patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces,<sup>o</sup> and the sound of it as he marched was loud and dry, like that made by the fall of a sheet of lead which an Etesian wind<sup>o</sup> blows suddenly

\* I do not approve the author's judgment in this, for I think Cowley's *Pindarics* are much preferable to his *Mistress*.

*The Episode  
of Bentley  
and Wotton.*



parched with thirst resolved to allay it in this limpid stream. Thrice with profane hands he essayed to raise the water to his lips, and thrice it slipped all through his fingers. Then he stooped prone on his breast, but ere his mouth had kissed the liquid crystal, Apollo came and in the channel held his shield betwixt the Modern and the fountain, so that he drew up nothing but mud. For, although no fountain on earth can compare with the clearness of Helicon, yet there lies at bottom a thick sediment of slime and mud; for so Apollo begged of Jupiter, as a punishment to those who durst attempt to taste it with unhallowed lips, and for a lesson to all not to *draw too deep or far from the spring*.

At the fountain-head Wotton discerned two heroes. The one he could not distinguish but the other was soon known for Temple, general of the allies to the Ancients. His back was turned, and he was employed in drinking large draughts in his helmet from the fountain, where he had withdrawn himself to rest from the toils of the war. Wotton, observing him, with quaking knees and trembling hands spoke thus to himself: \* 'O that I could kill this destroyer of our army, what renown should I purchase among the chiefs! But to issue out against him, man for man, shield against shield, and lance against lance, what Modern of us dare? For he fights like a god, and Pallas or Apollo are ever at his elbow. But, O mother! if what Fame reports be true, that I am the son of so great a goddess, grant me to hit Temple with this lance that the stroke may send him to hell, and that I may return in safety and triumph, laden with his spoils.' The first part of his prayer, the gods granted at the intercession of his mother and of Momus; but the rest, by a perverse wind sent from Fate, was scattered in the air. Then Wotton grasped his lance, and brandishing it thrice over his head, darted it with all his might, the goddess, his mother, at the same time adding strength to his arm. Away the lance went hissing, and reached even to the belt of the averted Ancient, upon which, lightly grazing, it fell to the ground. Temple neither felt the weapon touch him, nor heard it fall; and Wotton might have escaped to his army, with the honour of having remitted his lance against so great a leader, unrevenged; but Apollo, enraged that a javelin flung by the assistance of so foul a goddess should pollute his fountain, put on the shape of ———, ° and softly came to young Boyle, who then accompanied Temple. He pointed first to the lance, then to the distant Modern that flung it, and commanded the young hero to take immediate revenge. Boyle, clad in a suit of armour which had been *given him by all the gods*, immediately advanced against the trembling foe, who now fled before him. As a young lion in the Libyan plains, or Araby desert, sent by

\* *Vid.* Homer.



withdrew, in full resolution of performing some great achievement. With him, for his aid and companion, he took his beloved Wotton; resolving by policy or surprise to attempt some neglected quarter of the Ancients' army. They began their march over carcasses of their slaughtered friends; then to the right of their own forces; then wheeled northward, till they came to Aldrovandus's tomb<sup>o</sup> which they passed on the side of the declining sun. And now they arrived, with fear, towards the enemy's out-guards, looking about if haply they might spy the quarters of the wounded, or some straggling sleepers, unarmed and remote from the rest. As when two mongrel curs, whom native greediness and domestic want provoke and join in partnership, though fearful, nightly to invade the folds of some rich grazier, they with tails depressed, and lolling tongues, creep soft and slow; meanwhile, the conscious moon, now in her zenith, on their guilty heads darts perpendicular rays; nor dare they bark, though much provoked at her refulgent visage, whether seen in puddle by reflection, or in sphere direct; but one surveys the region round, while t'other scouts the plain, if haply to discover, at distance from the flock, some carcass half devoured, the refuse of gorged wolves or ominous ravens. So marched this lovely, loving pair of friends, nor with less fear and circumspection when, at distance, they might perceive two shining suits of armour hanging upon an oak, and the owners not far off in a profound sleep. The two friends drew lots, and the pursuing of this adventure fell to Bentley; on he went, and in his van Confusion and Amaze, while Horror and Affright brought up the rear. As he came near, behold two heroes of the Ancients' army, Phalaris and Æsop, lay fast asleep. Bentley would fain have dispatched them both, and stealing close, aimed his flail at Phalaris's breast. But then the goddess Affright interposing caught the Modern in her icy arms, and dragged him from the danger she foresaw; for both the dormant heroes happened to turn at the same instant, though soundly sleeping and busy in a dream. \*For Phalaris was just that minute dreaming how a most vile poetaster had lampooned him, and how he had got him roaring in his bull.<sup>o</sup> And Æsop dreamed that as he and the Ancient chiefs were lying on the ground, a wild ass broke loose, ran about, trampling and kicking and dunging in their faces. Bentley, leaving the two heroes asleep, seized on both their armours and withdrew in quest of his darling Wotton.

He in the meantime had wandered long in search of some enterprize, till at length he arrived at a small rivulet that issued from a fountain hard by, called in the language of mortal men, Helicon. Here he stopped, and

\* This is according to Homer, who tells the dreams of those who were killed in their sleep.



parched with thirst resolved to allay it in this limpid stream. Thrice with profane hands he essayed to raise the water to his lips, and thrice it slipped all through his fingers. Then he stooped prone on his breast, but ere his mouth had kissed the liquid crystal, Apollo came and in the channel held his shield betwixt the Modern and the fountain, so that he drew up nothing but mud. For, although no fountain on earth can compare with the clearness of Helicon, yet there lies at bottom a thick sediment of slime and mud; for so Apollo begged of Jupiter, as a punishment to those who durst attempt to taste it with unhallowed lips, and for a lesson to all not to *draw too deep or far from the spring*.

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\* *Vid.* Homer.



his aged sire to hunt for prey, or health, or exercise, he scours along wishing to meet some tiger from the mountains or a furious boar; if chance a wild ass, with brayings importune, affronts his ear, the generous beast, though loathing to distain his claws with blood so vile, yet much provoked at the offensive noise which Echo, foolish nymph, like her ill-judging sex, repeats much louder and with more delight than Philomela's song, he vindicates the honour of the forest, and hunts the noisy long-eared animal. So Wotton fled, so Boyle pursued. But Wotton, heavy-armed and slow of foot, began to slack his course, when his lover Bentley appeared, returning laden with the spoils of the two sleeping Ancients. Boyle observed him well, and soon discovering the helmet and shield of Phalaris his friend, both which he had lately with his own hands new polished and gilded,<sup>o</sup> rage sparkled in his eyes, and leaving his pursuit after Wotton, he furiously rushed on against this new approacher. Fain would he be revenged on both, but both now fled different ways. And, as a woman \*in a little house, that gets a painful livelihood by spinning,†if chance her geese be scattered o'er the common, she courses round the plain from side to side, compelling here and there the stragglers to the flock; they cackle loud, and flutter o'er the champaign,—so Boyle pursued, so fled this pair of friends. Finding at length their flight was vain, they bravely joined, and drew themselves in phalanx. First, Bentley threw a spear with all his force, hoping to pierce the enemy's breast; but Pallas came unseen, and in the air took off the point and clapped on one of lead, which, after a dead bang against the enemy's shield, fell blunted to the ground. Then Boyle, observing well his time, took a lance of wondrous length and sharpness; and as this pair of friends compacted stood close side to side, he wheeled him to the right, and with unusual force darted the weapon. Bentley saw his fate approach, and flanking down his arms close to his ribs, hoping to save his body, in went the point passing through arm and side, nor stopped or spent its force till it had also pierced the valiant Wotton, who, going to sustain his dying friend, shared his fate. As when a skilful cook has trussed a brace of woodcocks, he with iron skewer pierces the tender sides of both, their legs and wings close pinioned to the ribs; so was this pair of friends transfixed, till down they fell, joined in their lives, joined in their deaths; so closely joined that Charon will mistake them both for one and waft them over Styx for half his fare. Farewell, beloved loving pair!

\* *Vid.* Homer.

† This is also after the manner of Homer; the woman's getting a painful livelihood by spinning, has nothing to do with the similitude, nor would be excusable without such an authority.



Few equals have you left behind. And happy and immortal shall you be, if  
all my wit and eloquence can make you.

And, now	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*					

*Desunt cætera.*



## THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

104. *Bookseller*. The publisher; but the sentences were probably written by Swift.  
*Books in St. James's Library*. The royal library, inadequately housed in St James's Palace.
- 105 *Vide Ephem. de Mary Clarke; opt. edit.* 'Vincent Wing's' sheet almanac printed by Mary Clark; it contained the annual calendar [ephemerides], prognostications, and other material, and was embellished with a set of eight verses: 'War begets Poverty, | Poverty Peace: | Peace maketh Riches flow, | (Fate ne'er doth cease:) | Riches produceth Pride, | Pride is war's



ground, | . . . ' Swift's jocular reference parodies 'modern' pedantic citation and specifies the 'best edition'.

*in the Republic of Dogs* . . . A satirical version of Hobbes's political philosophy; see note to p. 18 (2).

106. *especially towards the East*. Referring to Temple's notions of traditional and unrecorded wisdom in Egypt, India, and the east.

107. *representatives, for passengers to gaze at*. Books were advertised by pasting up copies of their title-pages in the street.

*a certain spirit, which they call brutum hominis*. Guthkelch, 222, cites Thomas Vaughan's *Anthroposophia Theomagica* (1650), p. 58, quoting Paracelsus, as Swift's source for this phrase.

108. *to bind them to the peace with strong iron chains*. Swift's main joke refers to the books in chained libraries, but he also utilizes the magistrates' sentence of 'binding over to keep the peace'.

*the works of Scotus*. John Duns Scotus (?1265–1308), the 'Subtle Doctor', contributed to the already dominant Aristotelianism of European theology.

*the guardian . . . chiefly renowned for his humanity*. Richard Bentley, Keeper of the Royal Library; Boyle in the preface to his edition of Phalaris's *Epistles* sarcastically complained of Bentley's refusal of sufficient access to a manuscript, 'pro singulari sua humanitate' ('with that courtesy which distinguishes him'); Bentley, in replying, chose to take this as meaning 'out of his singular humanity', i.e. care of readers. *Humanity* could also mean classical literature and civilization.

*two of the Ancient chiefs*. Phalaris and Aesop.

109. *a strange confusion of place among all the books in the library*. Bentley argued that the royal library was so disorganized when he took it over in 1693, that he could not safely allow public access to it.

*the Seven Wise Masters*. 'The seven sages' of Greece was a collective description, also as 'the seven wise men', of any seven of a group of sages of the sixth century BC, including Solon and Thales. 'The Seven Wise Masters', however, or 'The Seven Sages of Rome', is the title of various medieval collections of stories nested in a tale concerning a young prince and his seven teachers. See p. 174 above.

*Withers*. George Wither or Withers (1588–1667), poet and writer of Puritan pamphlets in verse, commonly at this time cited as a hack rhymester, as in Dryden's *Essay on Dramatic Poesy* (1668); Swift yokes him with Dryden, and contrasts Dryden with the great poet Virgil, whose *Aeneid* Dryden had translated.

*light-horse, heavy-armed foot, and mercenaries*. Poets, historians, and translators.

110. *the Moderns were much the more ancient of the two*. The paradox was made by,



among others, Bacon in *The Advancement of Learning*, I. v. 1, '... These times are the ancient times, when the world is ancient. ...'

112. *my improvements in the mathematics*. The advances in mathematics during the previous decades, together with improvements in navigation and fortification as well as the work of the Royal Society, all formed the most powerful 'modern' arguments for the superiority of the modern age.

*the regent's humanity*. Bentley; see note to p. 108 (3).

113. *the borrowed shape of an ass*. In his *Dissertation*, Bentley quoted the Greek proverb, 'Leucon carries one thing, and his ass quite another', in relation to Boyle's mistaken view of the authorship of 'Phalaris's' *Epistles*. Boyle chose to say that Bentley distinguished between the Greek text and the ass who edited it.

*a large vein of wrangling and satire*. Temple's 'Essay': '... the vein of ridiculing all that is serious and good, all honour and virtue, as well as learning and piety ... is the itch of the age and climate, and has over-run both the court and the stage ...' (p. 161).

*sweetness and light*. A phrase taken up by Matthew Arnold in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869).

114. *consults*. '... the great consult [of Satan and his followers] began': Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 798.

*Despréaux*. Nicholas Boileau (1636–1711), known as Despréaux, was one of the chief French supporters of the Ancients; here as one of the leading Modern poets, along with Abraham Cowley (see note to p. 120 (1)).

*the bowmen ... Des Cartes, Gassendi, and Hobbes*. Philosophers ... Swift names as their leaders three of the leading Moderns in this field, united in Swift's eyes by 'sufficiency', belief in the uniqueness and novelty of their arguments. Each of them, too, elaborates a mathematico-physical framework for their ideas. Temple in his 'Essay' knows 'of no philosophers that have made entries upon that noble stage for fifteen hundred years past, unless Descartes and Hobbes should pretend to it'. See p. 157.

*that [arrow] of Evander*. In the *Aeneid*; although attention is drawn to king Evander's 'noble quiver of Lycian arrows' (viii. 166), it was during the archery contest (v. 485–544) that the arrow of *Acestis* 'caught fire, defined its track with flames and vanished into thin air, as shooting stars ...'.

*Paracelsus ... Harvey, their great aga*. Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim (1493–1541), Swiss alchemist and physician, took the name Paracelsus [the equal of Celsus, the principal Roman writer on medicine]; he struck out against medical dogma drawn from the traditional study of the writings of Aristotle and Galen ... William Harvey (1578–1657) demonstrated the circulation of the blood; Temple reasonably enough in his 'Essay' says that this had at that date made no change 'in the practice of



physic', but it had far-reaching theoretical implications. Harvey is given the title of a Turkish commander-in-chief.

*Guicciardine, Davila, Polydore Virgil, Buchanan, Mariana, Cambden.* Francisco Guicciardini (1483–1540), Florentine author of *Historia d'Italia* (1521; English 1579); Enrico Davila, *Historia della Guerre Civili di Francia* (1630); Polydore Vergil (1470–1555), an Italian who became naturalized and wrote a history of England (1534); George Buchanan (1506–82), Scottish humanist, the author of a *History of Scotland* in Latin (1582); Juan de Mariana (1537–1627), author of *Historia d'España* (1601); William Camden (1551–1623), historian and antiquary, author of the compilation *Britannia* (in Latin, 1586; translated into English from 1610).

*engineers . . . Regiomontanus and Wilkins.* Mathematicians . . . Johann Muller (1436–76) of Königsberg; John Wilkins (1614–72), one of the founders of the Royal Society, later Bishop of Chester; in his 'Thoughts on Reviewing the Essay', Temple sneers at Wilkins's *The Discovery of a World in the Moon . . . that . . . there may be another habitable World in the Planet* (1638–40) and at his *Essay towards a Real Character and Philosophic [universal] Language* (1668). Swift jokes about the latter ideal in *Gulliver's Travels*, 'Voyage to Laputa', chapter v.

*Bellarmino.* Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino (1542–1621), Roman Catholic apologist, who is linked with two of the great Schoolmen.

*calones . . . led by L'Estrange.* Roman grooms or lower servants . . . Sir Roger L'Estrange (1616–1704), translator of, among other things, *The Fables of Aesop and Others* (1692); see p. xiii f. above.

*Vossius.* Isaac Vossius (1618–89), Dutch scholar and canon of Windsor; Swift read his work on classical prosody, *De Sibyllinis*, in 1698 and owned a copy of it (SL 434).

115. *Momus, the patron of the Moderns . . . Pallas.* Momus, in mythology a son of primeval Night, became the personification of carping criticism; contrasted with Pallas Athena, daughter of Zeus and tutelary goddess of Athens.

*second causes.* See *Glossary*.

116. *schoolboys judges of philosophy.* See Temple, 'Essay', p. 159 above.

*seminaries of Gresham and Covent Garden.* In London, the Royal Society met at Gresham College in Broad Street until 1710; Covent Garden, the area of the theatre, of Will's coffee-house and others, and of the Rose Tavern (see *Glossary*), was the 'college' of the wits.

117. *Paracelsus . . . Galen.* The 'chemical' medicine of Paracelsus, Val Belmont and others, emphasizing observation and experiment, scorned the medical tradition founded on the precepts of the ancient Greek physician, Galen (see note to p. 114 (5)).

*Hic pauca desunt . . .* Swift parodies the formulae by which scholars indicated incomplete manuscripts: 'Here a little is missing', 'Not a little



wanting', 'A large hiatus in the manuscript', 'A hiatus greatly to be mourned'.

*Bacon.* Mentioned by Temple in his 'Essay' as one of the 'great wits among the moderns'; he is significantly not wounded.

*Des Cartes . . . his own vortex.* See note to p. 114 (3); Descartes' mathematico-physical picture of the universe involved a theory of *vortices*, which attracted hostile theological criticism as materialistic.

118. *Gondibert.* Sir William Davenant (1606–68) projected a heroic poem set in medieval Lombardy; this was published at some length, but unfinished, in 1651. 'Are . . . the flights of Boileau above those of Virgil? If . . . this must be allowed, I will then yield *Gondibert* to have exceeded Homer, as is pretended . . .' (Temple, 'Essay'; see p. 159).

*Denham, a stout Modern . . .* Sir John Denham (1615–69) was best known for a blank-verse play, *The Sophy* (1642), and for his innovatory topographical poem, *Cooper's Hill* (1642).

*Wesley.* Samuel Wesley (1662–1736) the elder, rector of Epworth in Lincolnshire and father of John and Charles. His extensive verse writings, especially *The Life of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: an heroic poem* (1693) and *History of the Old and New Testament in Verse* (1701–4), attracted scorn.

*Perrault . . . Fontenelle.* Charles Perrault (1628–1703), French poet and writer of fairy-tales, reformer of the French Academy, whose poem in praise of the Moderns, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* (1687), initiated the controversy in France (see p. 152) . . . Bernard Le Bovier, Sieur de Fontenelle (1657–1757), secretary of the French Academy of Sciences and author of several works on the side of the Moderns, principally *Nouveaux Dialogues des Morts* (1683) and *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes* (1688): see p. 152.

*the lady in a lobster.* A small, bony structure in a lobster's stomach.

119. *Dryden, in a long harangue.* Dryden published his translation of *The Works of Virgil* in 1697; a particularly long dedication to the Marquis of Normanby was prefixed to the *Aeneis*, dealing with epic poetry and the translation itself.

*Lucan.* Marcus Annaeus Lucanus (39–65), author of the unfinished epic poem *Pharsalia; De Bello Civili* [*On the Civil War*] in ten books.

*Blackmore.* Sir Richard Blackmore (c. 1650–1729), poet and physician-in-ordinary to William III and Queen Anne; his long philosophical, heroic and epic poems, such as *King Arthur* (1697), provoked satirical scorn at 'Blackmore's endless line', but Aesculapius, the god of medicine, takes a charitable view of his practice as a doctor.

*Creech.* Thomas Creech (1659–1700), translator: his version of *Lucretius* (1682) is quoted in *A Tale of a Tub*, and was followed by his *Horace* (1684).



*Ogleby*. John Ogleby or Ogilby (1600–76) translated *Aesop* into verse (1650); his *Virgil* (1649; with plates, 1654) and *Homer* (1660–5) were lavishly printed and illustrated; the *Virgil* plates were reused in Dryden's volume.

*Oldham . . . and Afra the Amazon*. Both John Oldham (1653–83), a notable satirist, and Mrs Afra Behn (1640–89), novelist and dramatist, tried their hands (as did Swift himself) at the fashionable, complicated Pindaric odes.

120. *Cowley*. Abraham Cowley (1618–67) had a very high reputation as a poet in his own day; he introduced the fashion for Pindaric odes in English; he published a collection of love poems, *The Mistress* (1647), which gains him here the protection of Venus.

*scarce a dozen cavaliers . . . ' . . . a giant stone . . . this, scarce twice six chosen men, of such build as earth now produces, could lift on their shoulders . . . '* (*Aeneid*, xii. 896ff.), an epic formula, also in Homer; several others are buried here and there in Swift's text, forming an important layer in the satire.

*a thousand incoherent pieces*. Critics scorned Bentley's habit of stitching together numerous quotations from classical texts, which they claimed he drew not from wide reading but from dictionaries and lexicons: cf. *A Tale of a Tub*, p. 69 above.

*an Etesian wind*. Regular winds [Greek, 'yearly'].

121. *Scaliger*. Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609), a classical scholar whose bad manners are noticed in Boyle's *Examination*, but defended by Bentley in his *Dissertation*.

*thy study of humanity*. See note to p. 108 (3).

122. *Aldrovandus's tomb*. Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605), a Bolognese naturalist, who spent his life on his compilations, his *tomb*.

*roaring in his bull*. Perillus invented the brazen bull for Phalaris, tyrant of Acragas in Sicily, in the early sixth century BC, and was himself the first victim of the device.

123. ———. Francis Atterbury.

124. *new polished and gilded*. Boyle's editing of Phalaris's *Epistles* (1695).

## GLOSSARY

- adust**, burned up with heat (also a medical term).
- afflatus** (literally) breathing upon; inspiration.
- alamode**, in the fashion.
- amarant** (*Amaranth*; *amarathine*) unfading (flower).
- ambages**, circuitous, roundabout ways.
- an**, if (an archaic word surviving only in dialect and proverb: 'ifs and ans').
- anatomy**, skeleton.
- anima**, air exhaled and inhaled, the breath of life.
- animal rationale**, rational animal.
- animus** (literally) wind; the rational and feeling soul, as opposed to *anima*, physical life.
- antitype**, the impression corresponding to the die; in typological interpretation, what is shadowed forth or indicated by the 'type' or symbol.
- approves**, shows, affirms.
- arcanum**, a mystery or hermetic secret.
- argent**, silver.
- arrect**, pricked up.
- ars poetica**, poetic art (as *The Art of Poetry*, the common title of a poem by Horace).
- atramentous**, black as ink.
- bagnio** (literally) baths or a bathing establishment; notoriously, a brothel.
- bait**, to stop for rest and refreshment.
- basso rilievo** (bas-relief); low-relief carving, in which the figures are raised only a little from the background.
- bedlam**, a bedlamite, inmate of the St Mary of Bethlehem Hospital for the insane in London (see note to p. 80 (1)), or any mad person.
- beeves**, oxen, cattle; *pl.* of 'beef'.
- bere**, barley.
- birth-day night**, celebration for a royal birthday, royal reception.
- bolus**, a large pill.
- boutade**, a sudden motion, like a kick from a horse's hind legs.
- briguing**, intriguing, conspiring, from *F briguer*.
- bulks**, frameworks projecting from the fronts of buildings in a street, stalls, used for sleeping rough.
- cabal** *vb.* & *n.*, to intrigue; the intrigue itself; a small clique of intriguers.
- calendae**, calends: the first day of the month.
- case** (physical) condition; *in case*, in good condition.
- cast a nativity**, frame a horoscope for prediction.
- chair**, sedan-chair, a common mode of transport in London.
- chapman**, purchaser.
- character**, a cabbalistic sign or symbol.
- cheapen**, bargain to reduce the price.
- choler**, bile: one of the four humours; hot and dry, yellow.
- christiana religio absoluta et simplex**, the Christian religion, complete, all of a piece.
- clap**, venereal disease, usually gonorrhoea.
- classis**, kind, division; it was also a



- Puritan word for the ministers of a district.
- clyster-pipes**, enemas.
- cockle**, the weed corn cockle (*Agrostemma githago*), whose seeds had to be sifted out of the seed corn; the task gave rise to several proverbs.
- coelum empyreum**, the highest heaven.
- coif**, close-fitting cap.
- coil**, uproar, fuss.
- common-place**, a passage or text of general application; often collected in 'common-place books'.
- commons**, daily fare.
- complaisance**, courtesy.
- complexion**, character, temperament.
- congee**, bow, originally at taking leave (*congé*).
- conjurer**, a person with occult powers; a fortune-teller.
- control**, to overrule.
- conversed**, an old form of *conversant*.
- copia vera**, true copy.
- copperas**, green vitriol or ferrous sulphate, used in making ink.
- copy-hold**, an English tenure of land, bound by the custom of the manor, less absolute than 'freehold'.
- cully**, a simpleton, gull.
- cum appendice**, with an appendix.
- cum grano salis**, with a grain of salt, sceptically.
- deshabille**, informal or leisure dress.
- desiderata**, things that are desired (to fill up blanks).
- desunt nonnulla**, not a few [words] are missing.
- devoted**, consecrated, doomed.
- dispensable**, subject to dispensation, able to be allowed; a royal 'dispensing power' was claimed by Charles II and James II, to set aside laws in special cases.
- disploding**, discharging or bursting out explosively.
- distress**, seizure of goods for the payment of a debt.
- districts**, limits, bounds; scope.
- division**, the disposition of material in a discourse, preliminary classification (in rhetoric and scholastic logic).
- drawing room** (royal) reception.
- duo sunt genera**, there are two kinds.
- elogy** (elogies), characterization(s); since these were usually favourable, the word became confused with *eulogy* and lost its separate existence.
- enormous**, out of the ordinary, abnormal: a Latinism.
- every fit**, every now and again.
- exantlation**, drawing or pumping out, as water from a well (L *exantlare*).
- ex cathedra**, from the bishop's chair, infallibly.
- expatiating**, wandering, roaming about.
- exploded**, clapped or hissed off the stage (L *explaudere*).
- ex post facto** (a law) made to punish a crime after it has been committed; retrospective.
- expostulate the case**, argue through, discuss, enlarge on.
- fact**, crime (in legal parlance).
- fade**, wan, commonplace.
- fee-simple**, absolute heritable possession.
- figures**, emblems; types (q.v.).
- flight-shot**, long-distance shot in archery.
- flirted at**, jeered at, bantered.
- fonde**, foundation, (financial) support.

**free-thinkers**, unbelievers; atheists.  
**fresh and fasting**, medicinal direction found in patent medicine advertisements.

**fugitive**, volatile (in chemistry).

**garnish**, money extorted by a gaoler in return for better treatment, particularly, allowing light manacles, or freedom of movement within the prison.

**gasconnade**, vainglorious boasting or fiction, from the reputed character of the inhabitants of Gascony in south-west France.

**goose**, tailor's smoothing-iron, with a goose-neck handle.

**grand monde**, the great world.

**Grands Titres**, Noble Titles.

**groat**, fourpence; i.e. a small sum, in proverbial use.

**hamated**, hooked (L *hamatus*).

**hic multa desiderantur**, a great deal is missing here.

**hieroglyph**, secret character or hermetic symbol.

**hobby-horses**, obsessions.

**horsed for discipline**, placed piggy-back to be flogged on the posteriors by a schoolmaster.

**impar**, unequal to the task.

**in capite**, in chief, holding land directly from the Crown.

**inclusivè**, inclusively, comprehensively (L *adv.* used in scholastic disputation).

**Index expurgatorius**, the list of books which Roman Catholics are forbidden to read, reviewed annually by the cardinals of the Congregation of the Index.

**individuation**, in Scholastic philosophy, the process leading to indi-

vidual existence as distinct from the species (*OED*).

**in foro conscientiae**, in the court of conscience.

**innuendo**, an explanation in parenthesis (legal and scholastic use).

**in petto**, secretly (It., literally 'in the breast').

**instinct**, animated, impelled

**interested**, concerned (archaic even in Swift's day).

**in terminis**, in the exact words.

**interstitia**, intervals.

**jakes**, a privy.

**jure ecclesiae**, by the law of the Church.

**King's Bench**, the highest court of common law in England.

**lantern**, a case for carrying a light, with transparent side(s) sometimes made of oiled paper.

**last**, a model of the foot on which a shoemaker or cobbler places the footwear on which he works.

**levee**, a (royal) morning reception, literally at the rising of the patron.

**lover**, affectionate friend, well-wisher.

**maire du palais**, the chief royal officer of the ancient Frankish kingdom [*mayor of the palace*]; turned the Merovingian kings into puppets, until (eighth century) Charles Martel seized the crown.

**mangé votre bled en herbe**, (having) eaten your corn in the blade; i.e. lived on your capital.

**marish**, obsolete form of 'marsh'.

**medium**, average.

**meum et tuum**, mine and thine.



**mobile**, *mobile vulgus* ('the volatile crowd'), the mob.

**morsure**, biting.

**multa absurda sequerentur**, many absurdities would follow.

**mutatis mutandis**, the necessary changes being made.

**needle**, not only the tailor's needle, but also the magnetic needle of the compass.

**nemine contradicente**, no one speaking against; unanimously.

**nostrum**, patent (or quack) medicine.

**nuncupatory**, oral.

**olios**, stews, cf. *olla podrida*.

**opus magnum**, great work; in alchemy, changing base metal to gold.

**ordinaries**, public eating-houses where a meal was regularly offered at a fixed price, as a *five-penny ordinary*.

**os sacrum**, 'the sacred bone'; a triangular structure at the base of the vertebrae, of which it is a continuation. A Jewish tradition explains its 'sacredness' as, resistant to decay, it will be the growth-point at the resurrection of the 'new body'.

**oscitancy**, negligence, sluggishness.

**pale**, an area within certain bounds, subject to a specific jurisdiction; cf. the effective English jurisdiction round Dublin established in 1547.

**pandect**, originally, Justinian's compendium of Roman law; hence any body of laws and, more generally, a complete digest of any subject.

**parts**, talents.

**party**, part, constituent.

**pennyworth**, bargain.

**pericranies**, brains (from L *peri-crania*).

**perorare**, to bring a speech to an end, to conclude.

**philologer**, lover of letters or learning.

**philomath**, a lover of learning, especially a student of mathematics or natural philosophy; frequently, an astrologer.

**phlebotomy**, opening a vein to bleed a patient.

**physic**, medicine.

**plate**, precious metal, usually silver.

**plight** (good) condition.

**points**, laces for fastening together parts of the dress.

**porringer**, a small basin or bowl.

**postulatum** (postulata) thing(s) demanded or taken for granted before an argument starts.

**prerogative**, the royal pre-eminent right, theoretically subject to no restriction, particularly the claim to be able to be outside the common law, also to make peace and war etc.

**pretend**, claim. *Pretender*, Claimant.

**primordium**, first principle.

**professors**, professionals (of any science, art, or activity).

**projector**, promoter; for Swift always in a bad sense, a cheat, a speculator.

**propriety** (proprieties), property; an older form favoured by Swift.

**prototype**, an original type (q.v.).

**puris naturalibus**, in a state of nature; naked.

**purlieus**, outlying districts, perhaps disreputable.

**put** (country) bumpkin, 'buffer'.

**quartum principium**, fourth principle, or element.

**quinta essentia**, the 'fifth essence' drawn from the four elements (earth, air, fire, water); in ancient

and medieval philosophy it was the substance of the heavenly bodies.

**quit**, requite, repay.

**quoad magis et minus**, as far as, more or less.

**ra[i]lly**, to banter, to treat with good-humoured ridicule.

**rationis capax**, capable of reason.

**receipt**, recipe, prescription.

**reinfunds**, pours in again.

**relievo**, a work of art in relief, i.e. parts of it raised from a plane surface.

**resent**, feel deeply, take badly. *Resentments*, feelings of indignation.

**Rose**, tavern in Russell Street, Covent Garden, frequented by men of fashion and play-goers.

**rubs**, disagreeable experiences.

**sack-posset**, a drink made of hot curdled milk, white wine (cf. *F. sec*), and perhaps spices.

**salivation**, the contemporary treatment by mercury of venereal disease; it stimulated the flow of saliva.

**sans consequence**, without repercussions; unimportant.

**save-all**, a holder that allows the candle to be burned to the last.

**scandalum magnatum**, libelling magnates (peers).

**scantling**, a sample or specimen.

**schools**, universities, from the places of disputation which formed a main part of the academic programme in Swift's day.

**second cause**, in Aristotelian metaphysics, there was a fourfold account of causality: (1) *material cause*, the stuff out of which a thing is made; (2) *formal cause*, the essence of that thing; (3) *efficient cause*, the impetus or effect by which a thing is

produced; (4) *final cause*, the aim or idea of the change.

**serve the king**, enlist as a soldier.

**shadows**, symbols, types (q.v.), foreshadowings, prefigurations.

**sheet**, broadside, or folded to a four-page pamphlet.

**si mihi credis**, if you will believe me.

**smatter**, talk ignorantly, prate.

**snap-dragon**, a Christmas game in which raisins are snatched from a bowl of burning brandy and eaten as they flame.

**sophisters**, at Trinity College, Dublin, third- or fourth-year students.

**spargefaction**, sprinkling.

**sparkish**, smart or elegant, likely to please a *spark* or dandy.

**specie**, kind, sort.

**spleen**, melancholy, ill humour, peevishness, depression; all thought to come from a disorder in that organ.

**sponging-house**, a baillif's house, in which he held debtors before their committal to prison.

**stews**, brothels, or in general the red-light district.

**story**, history.

**stroll**, to wander as a vagabond or prostitute.

**sub dio**, in the open air.

**summity**, summit (an obsolete form).

**summum bonum**, the supreme good.

**surtout**, an overcoat.

**tabby**, see *water tabby*.

**table-book**, a pocket- or memorandum-book.

**taking off**, distracting or diverting; also, putting to death.

**tell**, count.

**tentiginous humour**, an inclination to lust (from *L. tentigo*, an erection).



terms of art, technical expressions.

*tertio modo*, in the third way.

*toilets*, the morning ceremony of dressing.

*totidem syllabis*, in so many syllables.

*totidem verbis*, in so many words.

*totis viribus*, with all [our] strength.

*trait*, a touch or stroke.

*truckling*, subservient, obsequious.

*turned head*, opposite of *turned tail*.

*turnpikes*, spiked barriers across a road.

*twelve-penny gallery*, the cheapest (and uppermost) range of theatre seats, traditionally occupied by footmen.

*uncontrollable*, unalterable, independent.

*undertaker*, promoter of a speculative [for Swift, usually fraudulent] busi-

ness enterprise; contractor.

*use*, interest, hence *usury*.

*vamped*, refurbished, patched.

*vapours*, hysterics.

*virga genitalis*, phallus.

*virtuoso* (usually) antiquary, scientific dilettante [from It., 'one specially skilled']; *pl. virtuoso[es]*; or *virtuosi*; also *adj.*

*vizard*, visor (of a helmet); also, mask.

*water tabby*, wavy or water-silk.

*yard*, a straight piece of wood, a stick; (nautical) the spar at right angles to the mast which extends the sail; a tailor's measure; the erect penis.

*z[oun]ds*, God's wounds!